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Chapter 17 **The United States in World War II**

The U.S. helps lead the Allies to victory in World War II, but only after dropping atomic bombs on Japan. American veterans discover new economic opportunities, but also simmering social tensions.

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The United States in World War II

- Section 1: Mobilizing for Defense**
- Section 2: The War for Europe and North Africa**
- Section 3: The War in the Pacific**
- Section 4: The Home Front**

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Section 1: Mobilizing for Defense

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the United States mobilizes for war.

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Section 1: Mobilizing for Defense

Americans Join the War Effort

Selective Service and the GI

- After Pearl Harbor, 5 million men volunteer for military service
- 10 million more drafted to meet needs of two-front war

Expanding the Military

- General **George Marshall**—Army Chief of Staff—calls for women's corps
- **Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC)**—women in noncombat positions
- Thousands enlist; "auxiliary" dropped, get full U. S. army benefits

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***Continued* Americans Join the War Effort**

Recruiting and Discrimination

- Minority groups are denied basic citizenship rights

- Question whether they should fight for democracy in other countries

Dramatic Contributions

- 300,000 Mexican Americans join armed forces
- 1 million African Americans serve; live, work in segregated units
- 13,000 Chinese Americans and 33,000 Japanese Americans serve
- 25,000 Native Americans enlist

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A Production Miracle

The Industrial Response

- Factories convert from civilian to war production
- Shipyards, defense plants expand, new ones built
- Produce ships, arms rapidly
 - use prefabricated parts
 - people work at record speeds

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***Continued* A Production Miracle**

Labor's Contribution

- Nearly 18 million workers in war industries; 6 million are women
- Over 2 million minorities hired; face strong discrimination at first
- **A. Philip Randolph**, head of Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters
- Organizes march on D.C.; FDR executive order forbids discrimination

Mobilization of Scientists

- Office of Scientific Research and Development—technology, medicine
- **Manhattan Project** develops atomic bomb

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The Federal Government Takes Control

Economic Controls

- **Office of Price Administration (OPA)** freezes prices, fights inflation
- Higher taxes, purchase of war bonds lower demand for scarce goods
- **War Production Board (WPB)** says which companies convert production
 - allocates raw materials
 - organizes collection of recyclable materials

Rationing

- **Rationing**—fixed allotments of goods needed by military

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Section 2: The War for Europe and North Africa

Allied forces, led by the United States and Great Britain, battle Axis powers for control of Europe and North Africa.

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Section 2: The War for Europe and North Africa

The United States and Britain Join Forces

War Plans

- Churchill convinces FDR to strike first against Hitler

The Battle of the Atlantic

- Hitler orders submarine attacks against supply ships to Britain
 - wolf packs destroy hundreds of ships in 1942
- Allies organize convoys of cargo ships with escort:
 - destroyers with sonar; planes with radar
- Construction of Liberty ships (cargo carriers) speeds up

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The Eastern Front and the Mediterranean

The Battle of Stalingrad

- Hitler wants to capture Caucasus oil fields and destroy Stalingrad
- Soviets defeat Germans in bitter winter campaign
 - Over 230,000 Germans, 1,100,000 Soviets die
- Battle a turning point: Soviet army begins to move towards Germany

The North African Front

- General **Dwight D. Eisenhower** commands invasion of North Africa
- Afrika Korps, led by General Erwin Rommel, surrenders May 1943

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***Continued* The Eastern Front and the Mediterranean**

The Italian Campaign

- Allies decide will accept only unconditional surrender from Axis
- Summer 1943, capture Sicily; Mussolini forced to resign

- 1944 Allies win “Bloody Anzio”; Germans continue strong resistance

Heroes in Combat

- African Americans —Tuskegee Airmen, Buffaloes—highly decorated
- Mexican-American soldiers win many awards
- Japanese-American unit most decorated unit in U.S. history

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The Allies Liberate Europe

D-Day

- Allies set up phantom army, send fake radio messages to fool Germans
- Eisenhower directs Allied invasion of Normandy on **D-Day** June 6, 1944

The Allies Gain Ground

- General **Omar Bradley** bombs to create gap in enemy defense line
- General **George Patton** leads Third Army, reach Paris in August
- FDR reelected for 4th term with running mate Harry S. Truman

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***Continued* The Allies Liberate Europe**

The Battle of the Bulge

- October 1944, Allies capture first German town, Aachen
- December German tank divisions drive 60 miles into Allied area
- **Battle of the Bulge**—Germans push back but have irreplaceable losses

Liberation of the Death Camps

- Allies in Germany, Soviets in Poland liberate concentration camps
- find starving prisoners, corpses, evidence of killing

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***Continued* The Allies Liberate Europe**

Unconditional Surrender

- April 1945, Soviet army storms Berlin; Hitler commits suicide
- Eisenhower accepts unconditional surrender of German Reich
- May 8, 1945, **V-E Day**: Victory in Europe Day

Roosevelt’s Death

- FDR dies April 12; Vice President **Harry S. Truman** becomes president

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Section 3: The War in the Pacific

In order to defeat Japan and end the war in the Pacific, the United States unleashes a terrible new weapon, the atomic bomb.

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Section 3: The War in the Pacific

The Allies Stem the Japanese Tide

Japanese Advances

- In first 6 months after Pearl Harbor, Japan conquers empire
- Gen. **Douglas MacArthur** leads Allied forces in Philippines
- March 1942 U.S., Filipino troops trapped on Bataan Peninsula
- FDR orders MacArthur to leave; thousands of troops remain

Doolittle's Raid

- April 1942, Lt. Col. James Doolittle leads raid on Tokyo

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***Continued* The Allies Stem the Japanese Tide**

Battle of the Coral Sea

- May 1942, U.S., Australian soldiers stop Japanese drive to Australia
- For first time since Pearl Harbor, Japanese invasion turned back

The Battle of Midway

- Admiral **Chester Nimitz** commands U.S. naval forces in Pacific
- Allies break Japanese code, win **Battle of Midway**, stop Japan again
- Allies advance island by island to Japan

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The Allies Go on the Offensive

The Allied Offensive

- Allied offensive begins August 1942 in Guadalcanal
- October 1944, Allies converge on Leyte Island in Philippines
 - return of MacArthur

The Japanese Defense

- Japan uses **kamikaze** attack—pilots crash bomb-laden planes into ships

- Battle of Leyte Gulf is a disaster for Japan
 - Imperial Navy severely damaged; plays minor role after

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***Continued* The Allies Go on the Offensive**

Iwo Jima

- Iwo Jima critical as base from which planes can reach Japan
- 6,000 marines die taking island; of 20,700 Japanese, 200 survive

The Battle for Okinawa

- April 1945 U.S. Marines invade Okinawa
- April–June: 7,600 U.S. troops, 110,000 Japanese die
- Allies fear invasion of Japan may mean 1.5 million Allied casualties

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The Atomic Bomb Ends the War

The Manhattan Project

- **J. Robert Oppenheimer** is research director of Manhattan Project
- July 1945, atomic bomb tested in New Mexico desert
- President Truman orders military to drop 2 atomic bombs on Japan

Hiroshima and Nagasaki

- August 6, **Hiroshima**, major military center, destroyed by bomb
- 3 days later, bomb dropped on city of **Nagasaki**
- September 2, 1945 Japan surrenders

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Rebuilding Begins

The Yalta Conference

- February 1945, FDR, Churchill, Stalin meet in Yalta
 - discuss post-war world
- FDR, Churchill concession: temporarily divide Germany into 4 parts
- Stalin promises free elections in Eastern Europe; will fight Japan
- FDR gets support for conference to establish United Nations

Human Costs of the War

- WW II most destructive war in human history

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Continued Rebuilding Begins

The Nuremberg War Trials

- **Nuremberg trials**—24 Nazi leaders tried, sentenced
 - charged with crimes against humanity, against the peace, war crimes
- Establish principle that people responsible for own actions in war

The Occupation of Japan

- MacArthur commands U.S. occupation forces in Japan
- Over 1,100 Japanese tried, sentenced
- MacArthur reshapes Japan's economy, government

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Section 4: The Home Front

After World War II, Americans adjust to new economic opportunities and harsh social tensions.

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Section 4: The Home Front

Opportunity and Adjustment

Economic Gains

- Defense industries boom, unemployment falls to 1.2% in 1944
 - average pay rises 10% during war
- Farmers prosper from rising crop prices, increase in production
 - many pay off mortgages
- Percentage of women in work force rises to 35%

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Continued Opportunity and Adjustment

Population Shifts

- War triggers mass migrations to towns with defense industries

Social Adjustments

- Families adjust to fathers in military; mothers rear children alone
- Families must get to know each other again after fathers return
- Many couples rush to marry before husband goes overseas
- 1944 **GI Bill of Rights** or Servicemen's Readjustment Act:
 - pays education; loan guarantees for homes, new businesses

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Discrimination and Reaction

Civil Rights Protests

- Racial tensions rise in overcrowded Northern cities
- **James Farmer** founds **Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)**
 - works on racial segregation in North
- 1943 racial violence sweeps across country; Detroit riots worst case

Tension in Los Angeles

- Anti-Mexican zoot suit riots involve thousands servicemen, civilians

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Internment of Japanese Americans

Japanese Americans Placed in Internment Camps

- Hawaii governor forced to order **internment** (confinement) of Japanese
- 1942 FDR signs removal of Japanese Americans in four states
- U.S. Army forces 110,000 Japanese Americans into prison camps
- 1944 *Korematsu v. United States*—Court rules in favor of internment
- After war, **Japanese American Citizens League** pushes for compensation
- 1988, Congress grants \$20,000 to everyone sent to relocation camp